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ELK GROVE SCIENTIST INDICTED FOR THREATS AND HOAXES

SACRAMENTO-- United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury returned a ten-count indictment, yesterday, charging MICHAEL LEE BRAUN, 51, of Elk Grove, with one count of threatening the President of the United States, one count of sending threatening communications to an individual, and eight counts of providing false information and perpetrating hoaxes.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation coordinated by the Joint Terrorism Task Force, comprised of federal, state, and local law enforcement, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Secret Service, United States Postal Inspection Service, and Sacramento Metro Fire.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Ellen V. Endrizzi, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that BRAUN sent a letter on March 7, 2006 threatening to kill President George W. Bush. The indictment also alleges that BRAUN sent a letter on June 6, 2006 to Tom Sullivan, a KFBK radio personality, that threatened to kill his family. Both letters also contained an unknown, white powder that BRAUN claimed was "poison" and a "death powder." The remaining eight counts of the indictment allege that BRAUN sent letters containing a white powder to various hotels, organizations, and political figures as a hoax, with the intent that the recipients of those letters would believe that the powder was anthrax or some other poison. Laboratory analysis confirmed that in each instance the powder was non-toxic.

United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott commented, "Threats and white powder letters instill fear in the community and waste valuable emergency response resources. These cases are taken seriously and will be prosecuted."

If convicted, the maximum penalty under federal law for each offense charged is 5 years incarceration, a 36-month term of supervised release, and a \$100 mandatory special assessment. Additionally, the court may order BRAUN to pay restitution to state and local agencies, such as fire and hazardous materials teams, for the costs incurred in responding to the white powder threat letters. However, the actual sentence will be dictated by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of factors, and will be imposed in the discretion of the court.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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